

Pacific Southwest Research Station goes to Biobased Cutlery

In an effort to green its operations, the Pacific Southwest Research Station (PSW) of the U.S. Forest Service has initiated a number of sustainable practices aimed at conserving energy, reducing waste, increasing recycling, and increasing green purchasing.

Among these activities is the switch to sustainable disposable flatware and tableware products at awards ceremonies and other events where food is served at PSW headquarters. Food at these events is now served on biodegradable snack plates made from sugar cane fiber. Compostable disposable cutlery is made from plastic derived from corn grown in the U.S.

The sugarcane fiber used in snack plates is a byproduct of the sugar-refining process. This byproduct would have otherwise been disposed of in a landfill. And, the compostable flatware that is used by PSW biodegrades fully in commercial compost facilities after its useful life.

These products are inexpensive. Yet they send a clear message that the Forest Service values sustainable consumption (biodegradable snack plates cost PSW \$2.99 per 35-plate package while compostable cutlery cost PSW \$1.09 for each package with 8 forks, 8 knives, and 8 spoons).

In the picture below, Marilyn Burrows, Forest Service, Management Analyst, is using sustainable cutlery and snack plate at a recent Pacific Southwest Research Station awards ceremony.



For more retail* information on biobased plates, cups, and cutlery, visit...

Nat-ur (flatware bought by PSW): <http://www.nat-ur.com/>

Branch, Sustainable Design for Living (sells compostable flatware and biodegradable plates and cups): http://www.branchhome.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&products_id=181

*Products can also be purchased wholesale for use in cafeterias and at larger events.